

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMISSION

June 30, 2015

The Vienna Transportation Safety Commission (TSC) met in regular session on June 30, 2015, in the Vienna Town Hall Council Chamber, 127 Center Street S, Vienna, Virginia. Chairman Ed Somers opened the meeting at 8:05 pm with the following commissioners present: Vice Chairman Sharon Baum, Leonard Ignatowski, Andrew Meren, Mary McCullough, Beth Eachus and Sean McCall; Commissioners Becky Allison and Tamara Redmon were absent. John Jay Sergeant, Department of Public Works (DPW), Jennifer Sigler, TSC Clerk, and Sergeant Mike Reeves, Vienna Police Department (VPD), were also present.

Approval of the May 26, 2015 meeting minutes

Commissioner Eachus made a motion to approve the May 26, 2015 minutes.

Commissioner McCullough seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously, 7/0.

Fairfax County Transportation Planner, Adam Lind, shared a short presentation regarding wayfinding signage to be installed on the W&OD Trail, similar to the new signage installed at Wiehle Avenue in Reston. The signage is intended to guide cyclists to the various metro locations near Vienna.

Commissioner Eachus asked if there would be additional signage on Tapawingo Road at Nutley Street SW to direct cyclists toward the Metro.

Mr. Lind said he would look at it.

Commissioner Meren asked how the signage differentiated between the two Metro stations

Mr. Lind explained that the signage would state either "Vienna" or "Tysons."

Commissioner McCall asked if all the signage could include mileage.

Mr. Lind said yes, it can.

Department of Public Works (DPW) Report

The following is an update on the projects that DPW is working on that the TSC helped prioritize:

Ninovan Road – Completed 2-14-2014

W&OD Trail Connections – Completed 8-4-2014

Moore Avenue SE – Not started

John Marshall Drive NW – Final plan received, 4 rights of entry returned so far; projected August 2015 construction contract award

Glyndon Street SE– Construction contract awarded, gas line conflict, waiting for gas main relocation.

Ayr Hill Avenue NE – Town Council award of design contract May 11, 2015

Ayito Road SE– Council will award construction contract July 6, 2015.

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Beulah Road NE Traffic Calming Petition Introduction

The residents of Beulah Road NE and the adjoining cross streets submitted a petition requesting (one or more of) the following possible crossing improvements:

- a. Painted crosswalks
- b. Painted crosswalks with bollards
- c. Painted crosswalk with flashing warning lights or rectangular rapid flash beacon (RRFB) pedestrian signs
- d. Pedestrian-invoked stop light with painted crosswalk
- e. Three-way or four-way stop sign with painted crosswalk
- f. Stop light with painted crosswalk

Lead Petitioner Edgar Adamson, 230 Beulah Road NE, stated he had identified 103 houses on Beulah Road and one or two houses off Beulah Road all the way to the Town limit. Of the 103 homes, 83 immediately signed the petition in favor of traffic calming on Beulah Road, five declined to sign and 15 homes were vacant. He stated drivers are very aggressive on Beulah Road which makes it very difficult to cross the street.

Commissioner Meren asked if the Beulah Road construction made the situation better or worse.

Mr. Adamson replied it seems worse, maybe because Beulah Road is straighter now.

Bob Meyers, 300 Roosevelt Court NE, said 18 years ago crossing Beulah Road was a challenge. He is in support of improvements to the crossings on Beulah Road.

Fred Skaer, 414 MacArthur Avenue NE, a longtime resident of Vienna and a former TSC and Planning Commission member, informed the TSC his day job was working for the Department of Transportation. He pointed out Beulah Road has a very high volume of traffic and a speeding problem proven by a traffic study commissioned by the Town within the past ten years. At MacArthur Avenue and Beulah Road there are curb cuts but no painted crosswalk. There are only two painted crosswalks on Beulah Road at this time, which are very faded. He suggests adding a zebra striped crosswalk at MacArthur Avenue on Beulah Road and one at Ayr Hill Avenue as well. In addition, he would like the existing crosswalks repainted. He would like to see additional treatment such as signage as well. Finally, vegetation needs to be trimmed back on a regular basis.

Ray Daly and Owen Gardner, 305 East Street NE, shared while walking to school, Mr. Daly and his son often have to wait until a car stops in the middle of Beulah Road in order for them to cross at Ayr Hill Avenue. Some kind of pedestrian awareness is needed at this intersection. Mr. Daly once observed a

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pedestrian get struck by a vehicle that was coming down Beulah Road and taking a left onto Church Street while the pedestrian was crossing with the light.

Karen Akers, 348 Glyndon Street NE, wholeheartedly supports the petition. Saturday, July 4, Ms. Akers will recognize the first anniversary of her two teenage daughters and their friend being struck by an SUV while crossing Beulah Road at Creek Crossing Road near Glyndon Park. One daughter had a broken tailbone and the other had a severely sprained ankle; the friend broke her hand. She would like to see all the people who use Beulah Road coexist in some way to keep everyone safe.

Susan Gilbert, 406 Creek Crossing Road NE, has owned her home since 1996. She expressed concern about speeding on Beulah Road. She has stood at the crosswalk waiting to cross Beulah Road and often 13 or more cars go by before someone will stop to let her cross. She has several children and would like them to be able use Glyndon Park, but it is too dangerous for them to cross Beulah Road; she has to escort them to and from the park. Drivers are using Beulah Road as a cut through to avoid Maple Avenue. She would like to see a traffic signal at the intersection of Creek Crossing and Beulah Road.

Brandon Nevers, 416 Nelson Drive NE, is in favor of traffic calming measures and pedestrian improvements. In order to get to Glyndon Park, the W&OD Trail and their children's school, it is necessary to cross Beulah Road, but drivers do not respect the fact that they are trying to cross the street. Often Mr. Nevers must step into the street and stop traffic so his children can cross safely.

Paul Cumiskey, 405 Druid Hill Road NE, walks his dog every morning and ends up waiting to cross Beulah Road at Creek Crossing; sometimes 20 vehicles will go by without stopping. He believes that the crosswalk signage that is in place is not visible enough.

Mehdi Zomorodian, 350 Ayr Hill Avenue NE, would like to see zebra crossings in conjunction with flashing lights.

Pat Wartell, 332 Beulah Road NE, explained there are two problems. 1 - How can you get across Beulah Road; and 2 - How easy is it to go down Beulah Road to Maple Avenue without having to cross Beulah Road? She is in favor of some type of flashing zebra crossing at Ayr Hill Avenue. She is not in favor of a stop light at that location because it is too close to the light at Church Street and Beulah Road.

Bruce Kraselsky, 323 Park Street NE, said one of the reasons he moved to Vienna two months ago is the walkability of Vienna. He agrees with the addition of visual clues at crosswalks.

John Jerikian, 1819 Beulah Road, believes bollards like the ones at the bike path on Park Street and on Church Street help motorists be aware of the cyclists and pedestrians that want to cross the street and that Beulah Road would benefit from the addition of bollards.

John Hoel, 352 Ayr Hill Avenue NE, agrees there should be a crosswalk at Ayr Hill Avenue across Beulah Road because the sidewalk ends there and pedestrians and cyclists have no choice but to cross Beulah Road when they get to that section.

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Doug Francis, 413 MacArthur Avenue NE, reiterated at the corner of MacArthur Avenue and Beulah Road curb cuts were installed during the reconstruction, however it was never striped as a crosswalk. A child who lives on the corner is confined to a wheelchair; his mother cannot get him across the street. He feels it is unacceptable that a petition was required to resolve this issue.

Vice Chairman Baum asked Mr. Sergent to see about installing a sign in the vicinity that indicated there is a handicapped child living nearby.

Jennifer Mann and son Owen, 414 Cynthia Lane NE, shared Owen's experiences trying to get from one side of Beulah Road to the other where his school bus stop is located. There have been times that he had to wait 19 minutes before he crossing Beulah Road; often having to wait until the bus arrives to stop the traffic. In the winter it is dark when he walks to the bus stop, which makes it even more difficult. Ms. Mann added that residents living on the east side of Town, past Beulah Road, would like to walk across Beulah Road to get to downtown, but the traffic and lack of safe crossings make it difficult. She is in favor of adding crosswalk striping at MacArthur Avenue and Beulah Road and having more of a police presence at 7:00 am when the traffic is at its worst. She wondered why there is no pedestrian crossing button at the signal on Church Street at Beulah Road.

Chairman Somers asked why the sidewalk does not extend to Maple Avenue.

Commissioner McCall explained that VDOT was responsible for the Beulah Road reconstruction project, which unfortunately included taking down a lot of trees. NEVCA advocated for saving trees and part of the tree-saving plan was to eliminate some of the proposed sidewalks.

Pat Wartell, 332 Beulah Road NE, explained there was no sidewalk planned from Sherwood Drive to Ayr Hill Avenue; she had to ask VDOT to include this area in their sidewalk plan, which they did.

Commissioner Ignatowski said he would like to see a traffic study done.

Mr. Sergent explained a traffic study would be part of an engineering study.

Commissioner Ignatowski requested Fairfax County Public Schools safety experts be brought into the discussion. He wondered if there was a reason the Beulah Road reconstruction project did not include more crosswalks across Beulah Road.

Commissioner Meren said he is a new resident to the Beulah Road area having just moved. He likes the idea of a holistic approach to addressing the problems on Beulah Road. He is in favor of an RRFB (rectangular rapid flashing beacon) at Creek Crossing Road and clearing the brush that may be obscuring line of sight. He asked Mr. Sergent if the brush could be cleaned up along Beulah Road near Church Street.

Mr. Sergent said he would contact Parks and Recreation to have that done.

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Commissioner Eachus said she is in favor of bollards similar to those on Marshall Road and Park Street. She hopes the TSC will recommend short term options such as bollards and painting in addition to the full engineering study of the entirety of Beulah Road.

Commissioner McCall cautioned that crosswalks alone are not enough; additional treatments are necessary for pedestrian safety. The signs at Glyndon Park are this type of additional treatment, but even they are not enough. He agrees with Commissioner Eachus about a short term solution and the long term solution. He asked Mr. Sergent if DPW could stripe the crosswalk at MacArthur Avenue.

Mr. Sergent said he would see if that was possible or if it would require Council approval.

Chairman Somers cautioned the school should be involved in the discussions regarding safe crossings across Beulah Road.

Mr. Sergent assured the Chairman that the school's position would be considered.

Allison Gromman, 1855 Abbotsford Drive, noted there are children from outside Town who attend Wolfrap Elementary and need to cross Beulah Road inside Town as well. Ms. Gromman is in support of any pedestrian safety measures that can be implemented.

Chairman Somers asked how long it would be before the issue was back before the TSC.

Mr. Sergent stated he was requesting roughly three months.

Chairman Somers asked if the overgrown vegetation could be cut back in the meantime.

Mr. Sergent said yes it would be cut back.

Commissioner Meren asked about street lighting along Beulah Road.

Mr. Sergent explained that additional street light requests go through DPW who contacts Fairfax County who then makes arrangements with Dominion Virginia Power.

Chairman Somers expressed concern about intrusive lighting and whether the addition of new street lights would negatively affect homes in the area.

Vice Chairman Baum said there were many types of lighting and there were low-lighting options.

Commissioner McCall asked DPW to keep in mind the concept that pedestrians will not go further than about 600 to get to a safe crosswalk. He also asked the engineering study to consider bollards, RRFBs and other traffic calming methods and that they include reasons for NOT choosing one over the other, if applicable. Finally, he requested a mid-block crossing and a pedestrian button at Creek Crossing at Glyndon Park be considered with the study.

Commissioner McCall began to make a motion, but it was decided further discussion was needed before a final motion was made.

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Commissioner McCullough suggested the TSC hold off on a motion until the engineering study is done.

Commissioner Eachus reasoned that an engineering study must have been done before the existing crosswalk was installed when the Beulah Road was redesigned.

Commissioner McCullough said the width of Beulah Road is her concern regarding the installation of bollards.

Commissioner Ignatowski asked about parking along Beulah Road.

Chairman Somers asked if the TSC would like DPW look at the bollard idea and return to the next meeting with a recommendation.

Commissioner McCall pointed out that when the TSC makes a motion, DPW's recommendations are also included.

Commissioner McCall made a motion that the Transportation Safety Commission recommends the Town Council direct the Department of Public Works to install a temporary bollard at the center of the crosswalk [on Beulah Road NE] that connects Creek Crossing Road NE to Glyndon Park, provided that it meets engineering guidelines and review from the fire department.

Commissioner Meren seconded.

Motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Receipt of Petitions and Communications from the Public

NONE

Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) Report

There was further discussion about Marshall Road and the BAC should have a recommendation for the next TSC meeting. The BAC and the PAC met jointly to discuss bicycle traffic rerouting during Vienna festivals and will have a document ready for the next TSC meeting.

Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) Report

The PAC asked for permission from the TSC to do research on Pedestrian related grants. The Commonwealth of Virginia has implemented September as "Pedestrian Awareness Month," therefore the BAC/PAC will be placing an article in the Town newsletter among other outreach efforts.

Reports of Commissioners

Commissioner McCall reported that Vienna Elementary School's field day bike to school event had 279 children participating. That is well over the previous year's count of 186 attendees and exceeds their

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goal of 200. The Police and members of Town Council were present during the event. He would like to see the other schools in Town join in.

Commissioner Eachus shared that Marshall Road Elementary had 74 children arrive on bicycle during their bike to school event, which is impressive given that Marshall Road is very difficult to cross.

Vice Chairman Baum said that when she arrives at the Dun Loring Metro at 7:00 am, the bike racks are already packed. During a discussion about Safe Routes to School, it was discovered that the procedure for obtaining a grant had changed and now DPW applies for the grants directly as opposed to the schools or parents themselves having to do it. She noted that the sidewalks at Lullaby Lane and Harmony Drive are great and she finished by asking if the school hours sign should be updated to reflect the time change of Marshall Road Elementary.

Commissioner McCullough reminded Mr. Sergent that she would like to see the Marshall Road sidewalk done before school starts. She added that the sidewalks on Cottage Street are beautiful.

Commissioners Meren and Ignatowski declined to report.

Report of the Chairman

On the July TSC agenda, the BAC will bring forward a recommendation regarding bicycle parking on Church Street. Also, the TSC will discuss whether to hold their August meeting. Mr. Somers said he likes that Mr. Sergent reported on where DPW is regarding current projects and would like to see that in future meetings.

Commissioner McCullough asked that Mr. Sergent add whether the projects were requested by the TSC, by DPW or some other source.

Chairman Somers asked if there was an update to the mini-roundabout to be installed at Park Street and Locust Street.

Mr. Sergent said final plans were with VDOT and he was looking at a start mid-September.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned 10:35 pm